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16 September 1957

MEMORANDUM FOR: Project Director

SUBJECT : Thoughts on Edwards Air Force Base as Permanent Rear  
Base for Project AQUATONE Activities During 1958

1. Since our fragmentary phone conversation of last Saturday, in which you mentioned the possibility of serious consideration being given to making Edwards Air Force Base our "rear base" with small holding units in place at Adana and Atsugi, I have been attempting informally to evaluate the implications of this concept from a financial, personnel and security point-of-view, with a few grains of inter-Agency and international politics thrown in.

2. In weighing the advantages and disadvantages of using Edwards as our main ZI base, I have tried to be objective, using a balance sheet system. As I see it then, the advantages of Edwards are as follows:

a. Edwards would give us a legitimate PCS base from which to TDY personnel overseas, thus preserving the TDY benefit for military and civilian personnel serving at either Atsugi or Adana.

b. Assuming two aircraft each at Adana and Atsugi, the remainder of Agency-controlled U-2s would be concentrated at Edwards with the result that retrofit could be expedited and additional aircraft could be committed to R and D if required.

c. By consolidating the main parts of Detachments B and C, certain positions could be saved, especially in the administrative support areas; i.e., executive officer, administrative officer, finance, and possibly communications.

d. On the surface, Edwards would appear to be more attractive than Adana as a place to have families, though the cost to the individual would be considerably higher.

3. On the debit side, I assess Edwards Air Force Base as follows:

a. Consolidation at Edwards would mean the expenditure of considerable money to equip the flight line area and support buildings to handle a base unit such as we have there now, plus elements of two overseas units. The Air Force has programmed no such expenditure for Edwards, and, consequently, the money would have to come from Project funds. Should we build up the present North Base in the face of Air Force interest in closing it out, I ques-

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tion whether the Air Force and ARDC might not expect us to take over management of the entire base, with resultant involvement in base support functions now provided us, and at extra cost.

b. The concept of a main rear base at Edwards means ready availability of Air Force airlift, both personnel-carrying and logistics air, at considerable cost in dollars and lost man hours in transportation to and from overseas under a rotational philosophy. With the current emphasis on economy in the Air Force, and the actual shortage of airlift, e.g., C-124 and C-118 aircraft, time would undoubtedly be lost in calling up and dispatching planes to meet our requirements. This could be overcome by assigning something like a pair of C-124s to the Edwards group on standby, and possibly even a C-118, though this idea would be fought by the Air Force.

c. Expenditure of perhaps [ ] at Edwards to build up the base to handle our requirements would occur at the same time that we would be making less than maximal use of our investments at Adana and Atsugi, where we have spent some [ ] in the past. I am assuming that under no equation will we make use of [ ] where a [ ] investment will be written off.

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d. While Edwards appears like a suitable alternative to Adana in the sense that families would prefer to go to Edwards rather than to Turkey, housing possibilities in the area adjacent to Edwards are somewhat marginal and, save for a limited number of [ ] units on the base, are quite expensive, i.e., [ ] and up per month, unfurnished less utilities. This would work a hardship on married airmen and lower grade civilian personnel. Under the concept of an entire unit overseas PCS at Adana, the Project could rightfully pick up the check on most of the expenses incident to family housing, either on the base or on the economy. Then, too, basing ourselves at Edwards constitutes acceptance of the rotational TDY concept, which means that a man would have to leave his family at least once a year for a period of from 90-120 days. Rotating personnel oftener than 90 days would be prohibitive from an expense point-of-view. Colonel Geary has estimated the cost of rotational TDY for two bases in terms of additional per diem, cost of personnel carrying airlift and lost man hours as something in the neighborhood of an additional [ ] per year.

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e. From the political standpoint, there are as yet no reasons why we should withdraw from any of our overseas bases; in fact, based upon our discussions in Ankara, there appear to be valid reasons why we should remain in force in Turkey other than for the simple fact that it is operationally desirable. In Japan, our presence has not rippled the international waters, and in Germany

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the Adenauer victory has strengthened our leasehold if anything. I also question if we should not be hard-pressed to hold onto our hangar and facilities at Atsugi [redacted] in the face of Navy pressure on that base as a central point for Naval Air in the Far East. I doubt that we would be able to argue against SAC sending U-2s to Adana as effectively with two aircraft in place as we could with a full detachment.

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f. Lastly, the problems inherent in the transfer of contractor personnel onto and out of overseas contracts are significant. Lockheed Aircraft, for example, would have a union problem every time a man went from the base component at Edwards to an overseas contract and then back again at the conclusion of his TDY. Administratively, the burden would largely fall on Project finance, where separate pay plans for each man would have to be written several times in the course of a year under this concept, as opposed to once under a permanent PCS overseas idea. This would also mean added work for the Project in administering the personal financial affairs of military and Agency civilian personnel.

3. SUMMARY: In the light of the apparent imbalance between assets and liabilities involved in using Edwards as our main rear base, and in light of what I believe to be the not unattractive aspects of an overseas tour at Adana, I would recommend for your consideration that we make maximum use of our present assets in Turkey by stationing a full detachment there, and that we stay status quo in Japan, permitting PCS personnel to bring dependents to each place. I propose that we do as much as we can to assist in solving the housing problem at each overseas base, even to absorbing the entire cost of providing housing for married and single people.

Since under almost any concept we frame we will have large numbers of replacement personnel in all categories, contractor, civilian and military, I am not too concerned about our inability to field detachments in Turkey and Japan. While we may lose some pilot personnel by moving PCS to Turkey, I believe that by providing modern housing for families at little or no cost to them, we can preserve the nucleus of enough pilots to meet our requirement for seven such individuals at each base.

I also believe that we will reduce our expenditure for airlift support, escape spending money for facilities at Edwards for a short period of one year, and gain warm acceptance from the Air Force, if we preserve to the fullest our capabilities overseas. I cannot but believe that if

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we reduce to a small number our personnel and aircraft at Adana and Atsugi, we will be under constant pressure from SAC and/or the Navy to share our facilities with them, with results that we may find less than optimum.

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[REDACTED]  
JAMES A. CONNINGHAM, JR.  
Project Director of Administration  
PS/DCI

JAC/slh

Distribution:

- 1 - Project Director [REDACTED]
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## Remarks:

Dick: The attachment represents my considered evaluation and recommendation regarding the use of Edwards AFB as Project main base for 1958.

It should not be regarded as an all-out attempt to swing you against locating there; if you and Jack decide that it shall be Edwards, we shall vigorously support that concept.

However, until that decision is made, I feel that to refrain from expressing myself as I have would be to abandon my responsibility as one of your staff advisors.

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FOLD HERE TO RETURN TO SENDER			
FROM: NAME, ADDRESS AND PHONE			DATE
JAMES A. CUNNINGHAM JR			16 Sept 57
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